

AN HOSPITAL SUNDAY

FOR TORONTO



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Read before the Members of the Ministerial Association of Toronto

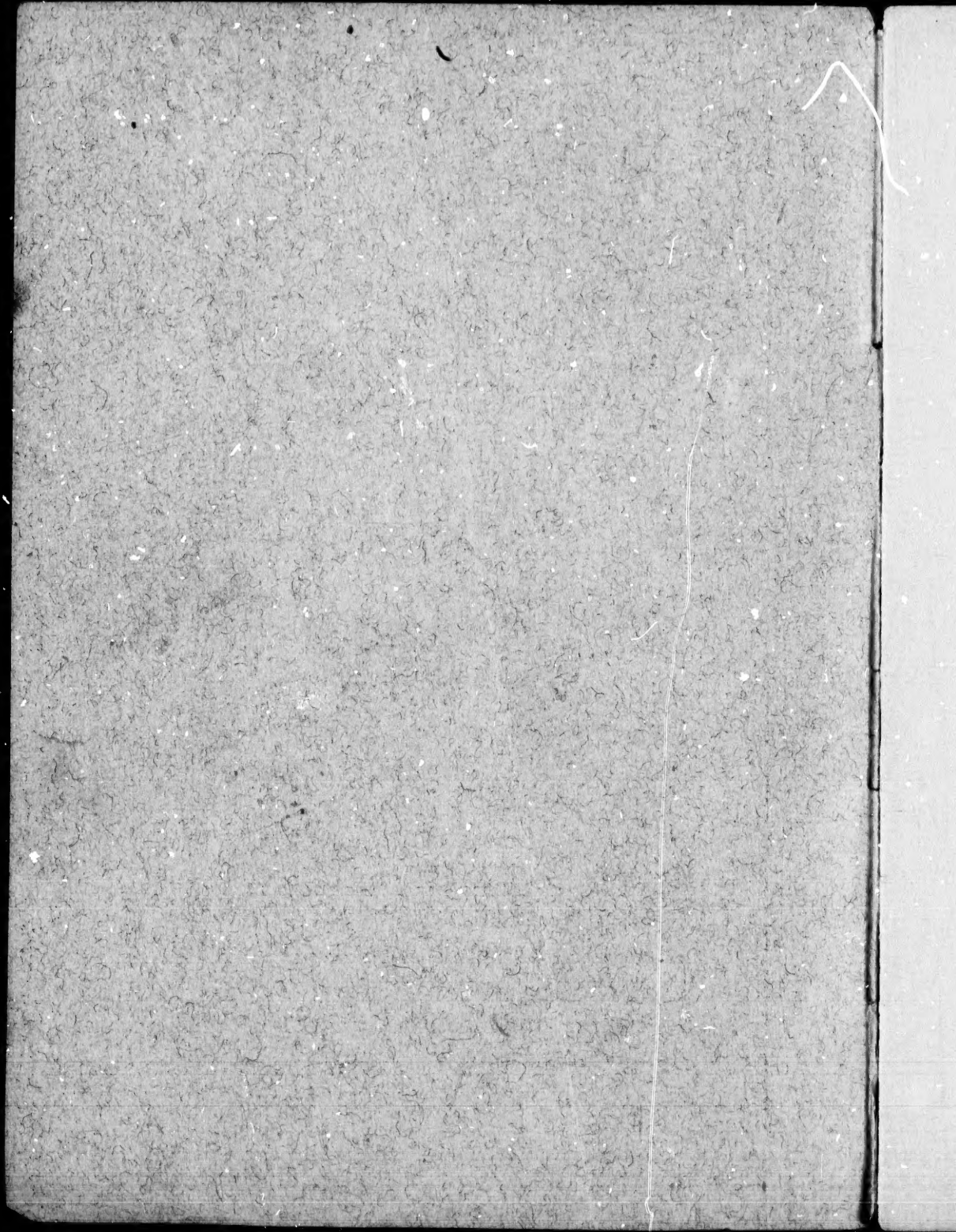
BY

DR. *J. H.* GEORGE HODGINS

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To the Members of the Ministerial Association of Toronto.

GENTLEMEN,—

As you have kindly consented to my request of last spring for leave to address you on the subject of the institution of an "Hospital Sunday" for the Toronto charities, I desire to bring the matter before you in as brief a manner as possible.

Such an institution (as I propose to advocate in this paper) has been in existence in England for nearly thirty years. It is, therefore, no novelty there; and, I trust, that it will soon be no novelty here.

The most practical of the liberal givers for benevolent objects have sought in a variety of ways to stimulate Christian effort in such a direction as to bring the matter statedly, systematically and continuously home to the conscience of the community in an effective way. The aim and desire of Christian philanthropists has been to develop, on a broad and liberal scale, a scheme of "systematic benevolence," so as to make it a perennial source of untold good, not only to those who receive it, but especially to those who give; for we have the divine warrant of the Master for saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

One of the most successful efforts, in this department of Christian activity, has been the establishment in various cities and towns in England of an organization known there as "Hospital Sunday." Those who have promoted it have also added to its efficiency by instituting "Hospital Week," and, in some places, "Hospital Saturday."

"Hospital Week," as the secretary of the fund in a letter from London informs me, "is the week before Hospital Sunday, in which special public

meetings are held in as many parts of London as possible, to try and educate the masses on the subject of hospitals [and such charities] and what they do, and then to try and get as many as possible to church or chapel on the Sunday to give their contributions." Such an effort, as will be seen, must have a most beneficial effect on the Sunday attendance at public worship.

In speaking of "Hospital Saturday," Rev. Canon Miller, of Birmingham, says: "Both in Birmingham and Liverpool they are not only continuing their Hospital Sunday, but there is a very remarkable movement still more satisfactory, namely, there is being initiated at Birmingham and Liverpool an Hospital Saturday—a movement by which the artisans will have an opportunity of contributing to institutions from which they derive so much benefit."*

* The Rev. Mr. McLeod, in his remarks at the meeting of the Ministerial Association where this paper was read, stated that Hospital Saturday was instituted in Liverpool, where he had resided; that boxes for Saturday (pay-day) donations and gifts from the workmen were placed in the various factories and other business places; that at the landing stage from the ferry at Birkenhead an open bowl, marked "for the hospitals," was placed; that it was generally well filled, nor was it ever known that anything was abstracted from it.

"Hospital Sunday," as its name implies, is one special Sunday set apart in the year, on which, from all the pulpits of the metropolis, the claims of the sick and suffering, and those who otherwise "have no helper," are brought before the various congregations, and a special collection for their benefit is taken up. These various collections are thrown into one common fund, which is distributed amongst all the hospitals and kindred institutions of the city by a general council—representative in its character, and under the presidency of the Lord Mayor of London for the time being. This council in London consists of fifty clerical and fifty lay members, chosen from amongst the most prominent of the clergy and laity of the various Christian communions. The Lord Mayor is *ex officio* president and treasurer. There is a vice-president, two honorary secretaries and a paid secretary, with committees on "Distribution" and "General Purposes." The minister and two laymen from each contributing congregation meet every year to appoint the council for the following year.

As frequently happens in important and successful enterprises, the institution of the benevolent scheme of "Hospital Sunday" was the result of the efforts of a few zealous individuals in the town of Birmingham, England, about thirty years ago. After it had proved to be a practical success in Birmingham, Christian benevolence was invoked in its behalf in Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Newcastle, Chester, and many other of the large towns in England. It soon became one of the most popular institutions, or enterprises, in these important centres of population. In 1873 an influential meeting was held in London to promote its establishment in the metropolis. Representatives from all of the churches, chiefly clerical, took part in that important gathering under the presidency of the Lord Mayor. In his opening remarks that gentleman urged the adoption of the scheme for the following reasons. They are especially appropriate on the present occasion, and are so entirely applicable to the religious and social condition of our people in this city that I shall briefly quote them. He said :

“I believe that the establishment of ‘Hospital Sunday’ in London would be a great benefit in deepening, strengthening and uniting religious feeling throughout the whole of the metropolis—for, on that day, all congregations would feel, whatever might be their differences of creed, that they were assisting in promoting a great Christian object. . . . It would, I think, be glorious to know that, on one Sunday in the year, the worshippers in every temple throughout the metropolis came to the altar, before which they were accustomed to worship, and tendered a mite—each according to his means—in the promotion of one common object”—the relief of suffering and sorrow and misery.

The Rev. Canon Miller, one of the chief promoters of the original Hospital Sunday in Birmingham, added the result of his experience as to the practical working of the scheme in that place. He said :

“It is a more legitimate mode of raising money than hospital dinners or bazaars, or other questionable modes of appeal to the benevolence of the people. It is acting on

Christian principles, instead of receiving pleasure in return for what is received. One of the great effects of this movement will be that you will have small contributions from great masses of the people. And we have not yet realized the great power of little sums, when they are collected together and used for a common object. As to an objection which has been urged that it would diminish contributions, the experience of Birmingham shows that it is not the case. Two years ago the subscriptions to one of the great hospitals in Birmingham were £600 sterling a year more than they had been in any year before Hospital Sunday was instituted."

Speaking of the great practical importance of agreeing upon one particular Sunday in the year for the advocacy of this noble cause of Christian charity and benevolence, Canon Miller said :

"I rejoice to think that all sections of the Christian Church and our Hebrew fellow-men will aid in this movement, and that there will be one day in the year when this great homage will be paid to mercy. A lamented friend of

mine, Rev. J. Angell James, speaking at a meeting in Birmingham on a memorable occasion, said : ' There is no sectarianism in misery, and there should be none in mercy.'

"I venture most emphatically and earnestly to urge the conference to aim at simultaneousness as being absolutely essential to the success of the movement. Otherwise I am persuaded the movement will be a failure in a very short time."

On this point Cardinal Manning, who took part in the meeting, and heartily endorsed the movement, said :

" If this simultaneous Sunday collection is to be obtained and maintained—and I entirely agree with Canon Miller that the simultaneousness of it is vital to its success and permanence—we ought to have on the council such a federal representation of all these various bodies that we can communicate with them in detail, and ensure that exact punctuality in detail which is necessary to the success of the whole operation."

Speaking of the composition of this council, Cardinal Manning said :

" There will be on it proportionate numbers,

chosen from each separate communion of Christians, who will undertake to work together with all their hearts for this common object ; and I think that the importance of this federal union is very great."

As to the results which have followed the institution of Hospital Sunday in London, I may say that in 1873 the sum of £27,700 sterling, or \$138,500, was collected in 1,072 congregations ; in 1880, \$152,120 were collected in 1,225 congregations, and this year (1887) \$205,000 were collected from 1,598 congregations. This latter sum was distributed amongst 108 hospitals and 50 dispensaries, being on an average \$1,300 to each. The principle upon which the distribution is made is based upon the total average expenditure of each institution for the last three years, omitting amounts received from endowments. In every case the merits and pressing needs of the institution are fully enquired into and considered by the Committee on Distribution.

There is no reason, in our smaller community, why the objects and contributions of Hospital Sunday in Toronto should not embrace the

whole field of our charities—(a list of which, with their income for 1886, is appended)—including the hospitals and infirmaries and those valuable institutions recently established, especially the Hillcrest Convalescent Home, Humane Society (including the protection of women and children), the Relief Society, the Industrial Institute for Girls and the Industrial School for Boys. It would have the effect of giving a wider scope to the objects of Hospital Sunday, and would tend to enlist the sympathies of the entire community ; for every object likely to excite its interest or regard would then be embraced in the field of operations. The Mayor, as in London, might be president and treasurer, *ex officio*, and those who take part in the movement, as contributing congregations, might elect the first council.

It only remains for me to summarize some of the advantages of the institution of Hospital Sunday in Toronto :

(1). It would, on the principle of concentration, emphasize, from all the pulpits of this city, with a distinctness and force never before felt, the great and exalted principle of Christian

benevolence, and of giving to those in need for the Master's sake.

(2). It would bring home to the entire community, pointedly, at least once a year, a sense of their responsibility and duty to those of our brethren who are helpless and dependent upon others for loving care and sympathy.

(3). It would be a means of diffusing among the mass of our citizens some information in regard to our various charities and benevolent institutions; and it would excite a desire to know more about them than is generally known at present.

(4). Such information, thus diffused, with the loving appeal which would accompany it, would have the effect of stimulating the desire of many to respond to an appeal thus made. The effect doubtless would be an increase in the numbers of the now comparatively few who stately and systematically contribute to the charities of the city.

(5). The effect of "giving"—under such influences—would be to neutralize the evils of perfunctory giving, merely to get rid of the collector. Such giving (as the last report of the

Wisconsin State Board of Charities points out) is "the easiest and cheapest way to get rid of the subject ; but it is not true charity. The truest charity," it states, "gives thought and sympathy, and time and trouble, and then gives money where it is really needed."

(6). It would greatly lighten the arduous labours of the devoted Christian ladies (although it would not relieve them of the duty), on whom devolves the difficult and often very discouraging duty of collecting from house to house for our various charities.

(7). It would concentrate public attention on the condition and needs of the less favoured amongst us, and who, as children of a common father, are dependent upon the help and ministrations of those who lovingly acknowledge the Fatherhood of God over all.

(8). It would tend to systematize, as well as supplement, the present uncertain and necessarily desultory modes of providing for the city charities ; and it would give a specific place (in the Church festivals or anniversaries) to the subject of the duty of caring for the poor and the afflicted—a duty which our Lord so graci-

ously and lovingly inculcated as a service done unto Himself.

For "the King shall answer and say unto them * *

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

J. GEORGE HODGINS.

TORONTO,

24th Oct., 1887.

INCOME OF THE CHARITIES AND OTHER BENEVOLENT INSTITUTIONS IN
THE CITY OF TORONTO, 1886

NAME.	Total Inmates.		From outside Toronto.		Subscriptions and other contributions.		City Grant.		Government Grant.		Total Income.		Grand Total.	
					\$	c.	\$	c.	\$	c.	\$	c.	\$	c.
House of Industry.....	149	4	4	4	4200	24	6300	00	1824	20	12324	44		
Home for Incurables.....	77	8	8	8	4643	65	1000	00	3030	50	8674	55		
Aged Woman's Home.....	26	4	4	4	825	75	In Refuge		acc. 390	04	1215	79		
Orphans' Home.....	238	17	17	17	7771	69	1250	00	1077	26	10098	95		
Girls' Home.....	122	4	4	4	4396	37	500	00	594	64	5491	01		
Boys' Home.....	160	37	37	37	5454	59	500	00	624	70	6579	29		
New-boys' Lodging.....	111	49	49	49	2243	40	400	00	216	48	2859	88		
Infants' Home.....	50	23	23	23	1911	46	900	00	1225	00	4036	46		
Hospital for Sick Children	143	29	29	29	3349	37	800	00	1704	82	5845	19		
Industrial Refuge.....	85	85	85	85	3477	45	600	00	245	68	4323	13		
Prison Gate Mission.....	40	40	40	40	2021	76	800	00	.....	.....	2821	76		
Prisoners' Aid Association	.....	.....	.....	.....	744	27	300	00	1875	00	3204	27		
Ditto from other counties	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	285	00	.....	.....	.....	.....
Relief Society *	.....	.....	.....	.....	1785	02	900	00	.....	.....	2685	02		
Toronto Dispensary.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1000	00	.....	.....	.....	.....
Convalescent Hospital.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1000	00	.....	.....	.....	.....
Eye and Ear Dispensary.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	200	00	.....	.....	.....	.....
					est. 1250	00					est. 3900	00		

Old Folks' Home	1201	175	1481 93	150 00	1481 93	75541 67
Sisterhood of St. John				300 00		
Girls' Industrial Institute						
	1201	175	45547 95	17185 00	12808 72	75541 67
House of Providence	505	164	17917 71	2000 00	9030 52	28948 23
K. C. Orphan Asylum	483	185	6789 23	200 00	1952 70	8941 93
Good Shepherd's Refuge	80	20	6271 28		268 96	6540 24
St. Nicholas Home	166	23	3053 27	500 00	270 74	3824 01
St. Vincent de Paul †			497 74			497 74
	1234	392	34529 23	2700 00	11522 92	48752 15
General Hospital	2504	1338	4573 33			
Hospital Trust			12749 04	11177 15	19166 06	63218 45
Patients			14239 47			
County Grants			1313 40			
						63218 45
Grand Total						\$187572 27

* 681 assisted during the year.

† 163 relieved during the year.

NOTE.—These statistics are taken from the Government Inspector's reports, or from the report of the charity itself. The other benevolent institutions in Toronto not mentioned above are: The Hillcrest Convalescent Home, the Boys' Industrial Home, the Humane Society (including the protection of women and children), the Young Men's Christian Association, and the Woman's Christian Association. St. James' Cathedral maintains an "Old Woman's Home" at an expense of about \$750, and St. George's Church supports a Home for Aged Men and Women, regardless of denomination.